

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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USEC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, SP
SUBJECT: SYNDICAL RELATIONS MINISTER DE LA MATA ON LABOR MATTERS

1. SYNDICAL RELATIONS MINISTER ENRIQUE DE LA MATA
ADDRESSED HIMSELF TO A NUMBER OF LABOR ISSUES DURING THE
COURSE OF ECTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS JANUARY 17 AT A CIRCULO
DIPLOMATICO DE MADRID DINNER. THE HIGHLIGHTS ARE SUMMARIZED
BELOW.

2. WHILE POLITICAL DEMOCRATIZATION COULD PERHAPS BE
ACCOMPLISHED BY STAGES, LABOR REFORM REALLY COULD NOT:
THERE MUST BE UNCONDITIONAL AND UNLIMITED FREE TRADE
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UNIONISM ("ONE CANNOT GO HALFWAY IN THE FACTORIES") AND
THE SUAREZ GOVT ACCEPTED SUCH A SCENARIO. TURNING TO
THE HEATED CORTES DEBATE ON THE LABOR REFORM BILL (MADRID
368), DE LA MATA SAID THEY WERE DETERMINED TO BRING THE
MATTER TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION. FREE TRADE UNIONISM WAS
ALREADY A FACT OF LIFE IN SPAIN, AND THE PROPOSED
LEGISLATION WOULD MERELY PUT THE LEGAL STAMP ON WHAT

ALREADY EXISTED. HE NOTED HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING SPAIN'S LABOR REFORM WITH IOL'S BLANCHARD IN GENEVA ON JANUARY 25.

3. DE LA MATA DEFTLY FIELDDED A VARIETY OF QUESTIONS. SOCIAL PACT. THIS WAS AT PRESENT A DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE ON THE SHORT TERM. THE "HOT AUTUMN". IT NEVER REALLY OCCURED. AND AS A MATTER OF FACT THE SECOND HALF OF 1876 HAD FEWER LABOR CONFLICTS THAN THE FIRST. 1976 SET A RECORD FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS (CBA'S), WITH 1500 BEING SIGNED IN THE LAST TRIMESTER ALONE. SO REPLACED BY AISS? DE LA MATA DENIED THAT THE SSO, CURRENTLY BEING DISMANTLED, WAS IN EFFECT BEING REPLACED BY ANOTHER GOVT INSTITUTION, THE AISS (ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIO PROFESSIONAL SERVICES). THE AISS WAS ONLY A TEMPORARY ORGANIZATION, HE ASSERTED. FORMED TO DISPOSE OF SPECIFIC PROBLEMS. WITH RESPECT TO THE CONTROVERSIAL AISS FEES OR DUES WHICH WOULD BE STILL AUTOMATICALLY CHECKED OFF WORKERS PAY HE NOTED THAT THE GOVT BUDGET WOULD BE ABSORBING THAT EXPENSE COME 1978.

4. SSO PATRIMONY. THE MINISTER ESTIMATED IT AT SOME \$300 MILLION, MUCH OF IT BEING HANDLED BY THE BANCO RURAL Y MEDITERRANEO (50 PER CENT, AND INVESTED IN THE SSO RADIO STATION AND NEWSPAPER (PUEBLO). THE WORKERS AND THE NEW UNIONS MUST DECIDE ON THE QUESTION OF THE DIVISION OF SSO ASSETS NOT HE AS MINISTER. UNTIL AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED BY ALL, THE FUNDS WOULD REMAIN ON ICE. (WE MUST REMEMBER THAT DE LA MATA HAD EARLIER TOLD US THAT THE VAST BULK OF THE SSO PATRIMONY WAS IN FACT "PUBLIC PROPERTY" WHICH WOULD BE CONTINUED TO BE USED BY THE GOVT FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL WORKERS THROUGH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VARIOUS ON GOING SOCIAL PROGRAMS MADRID 8559). THE MINISTER CONSIDERED AS A ENTIRELY SEPARATE QUESTION THE ISSUE OF SPECIFIC ASSETS (E.G. PROPERTIES OF THE SOCIALIST UGT) CONFISCATED AFTER THE CIVIL WAR. ONCE LEGALIZED, HE PERSONALLY FAVORED SUCH UNION CLAIMANTS RECEIVING THEIR SETTLEMENTS FORTHWITH.

5. DE LA MATA'S VERY FRANK AND OPEN DISCUSSION OF CURRENT LABOR ISSUES RECEIVED FAVORABLE COMMENT. HIS WILLINGNESS TO TACKLE A NUMBER OF OBVIOUSLY LOADED QUESTIONS WAS MUCH APPRECIATED BY THE ASSEMBLED DIPLOMATS. STABLER

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